Supervision Basics
For the New, Aspiring,
and Exhausted Supervisor

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CPI Supervisor Workforce Development Project

Presentation at Alliance for Rights and Recovery 42nd Annual Conference

Learning Objectives

- Participants will be able to:
  - Discuss the process of transitioning to a supervisory position
  - Describe supervisory roles and the competencies necessary to fulfill them
  - Identify the elements necessary to support staff professional and personal development
  - Recognize the importance of bringing the principles of cultural humility into their supervisory practice

Definition of Supervision

- Supervision is "a social influence process that occurs over time, in which the supervisor participates to ensure quality of (clinical) care." Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (2007)

- A supervisor is an agency administrative staff member to whom authority is delegated to direct, coordinate, enhance, and evaluate on-the-job performance of the supervisees for whose work they are held accountable. (Alfred Kadushin)

What Do Supervisors Do?

- Supervisors
  - Ensure the provision of high-quality services to recipients
  - Teach, observe, mentor, coach, evaluate and inspire staff
  - Implement agency initiatives
  - Review and provide feedback on documentation
  - Create an atmosphere that promotes motivation, learning and professional development
  - Build cohesive, supportive teams
  - Help shape agency culture
  - Demonstrate cultural humility
  - Model ethical practice
  - Provide direct services
 - Other……..?

The Role of the Supervisor

Roles of the Supervisor
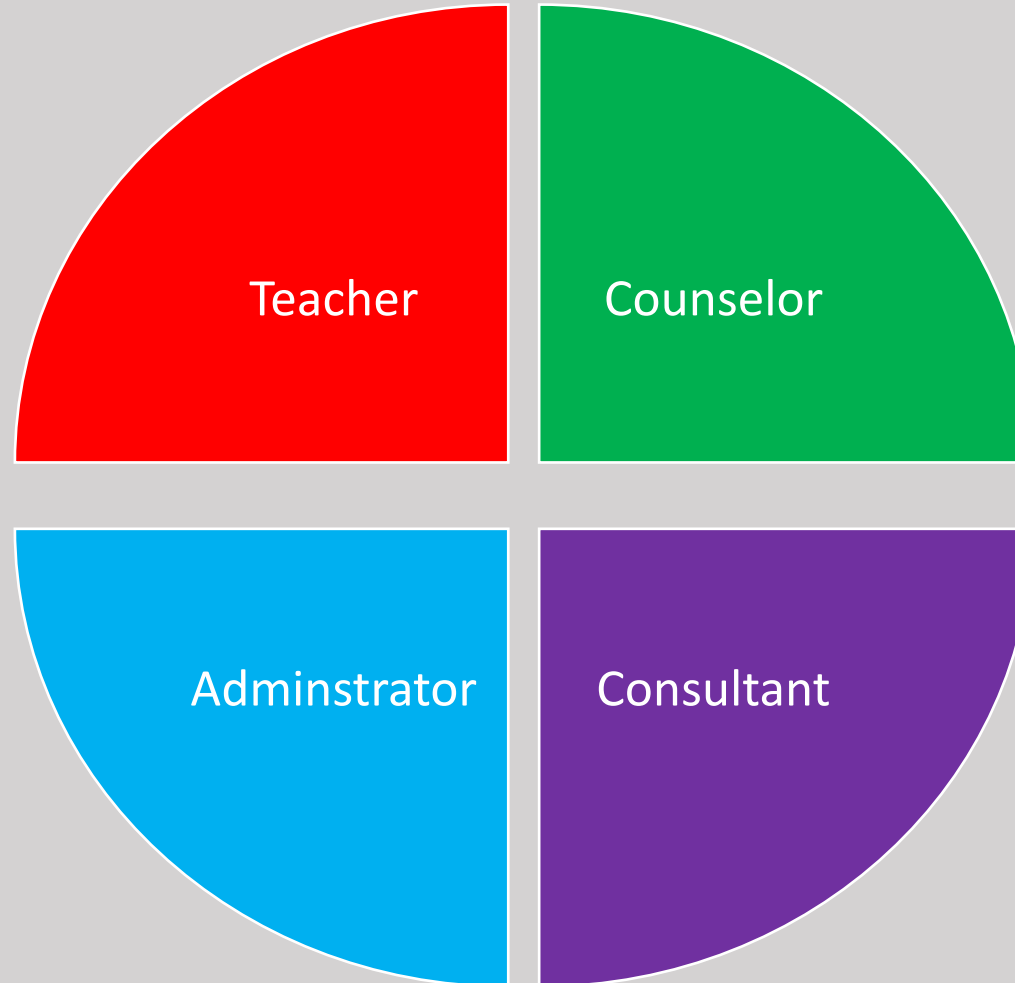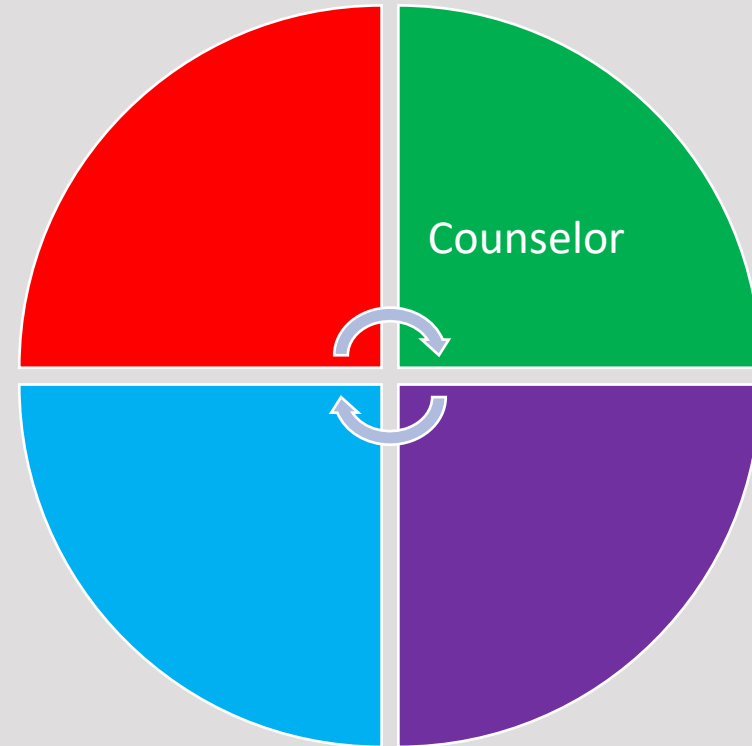
The Role of the Supervisor
The "Teacher" Role

- As a "teacher" the supervisor:
  - Transmits knowledge
  - Engages staff in assessing their strengths and needs
  - Is responsible for setting structure and expectations for individual and team performance
  - Explains the rationale behind clinical and administrative decisions – *"Rational Authority"*
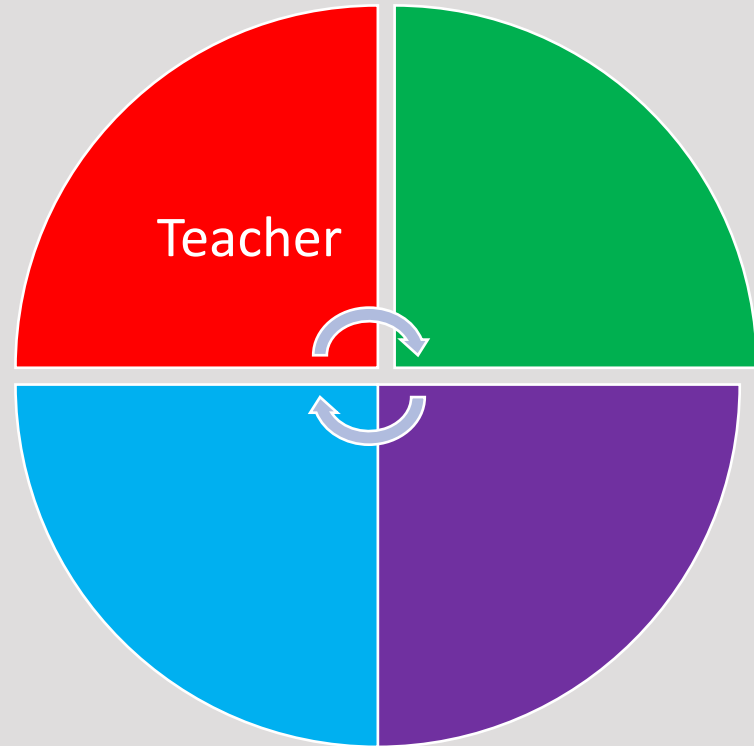
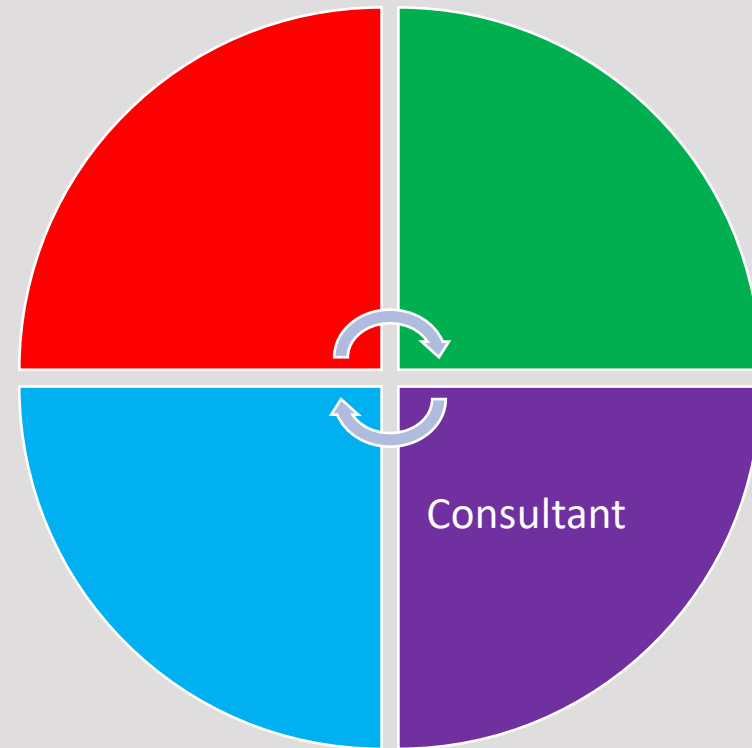# The Role of the Supervisor "Counselor" Role

- As a "counselor" the supervisor supports staff in:
  - Assessing and establishing professional development goals
  - Maintaining professional boundaries
  - Developing self-awareness
  - Supporting staff in practicing self-care
  - Listening for cues that reflect a staff member needing additional support outside of supervision

Counselor

The Role of the Supervisor
The "Consultant" Role

- As a "consultant" the supervisor:
 - Focuses on case consultation and review
  - Helps the supervisee to think more analytically and critically.
  - Provides guidance more than answers
  - Assesses and monitors staff performance
  - Supports movement toward more independent practice

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The Role of the Supervisor
The "Administrator" Role

- As an "administrator" the supervisor focuses on:
  - Documentation
  - Compliance
  - Confidentiality/HIPAA mandates
  - Monitoring and implementing policies and procedures
  - Productivity expectations
  - Documentation of performance

Administrator
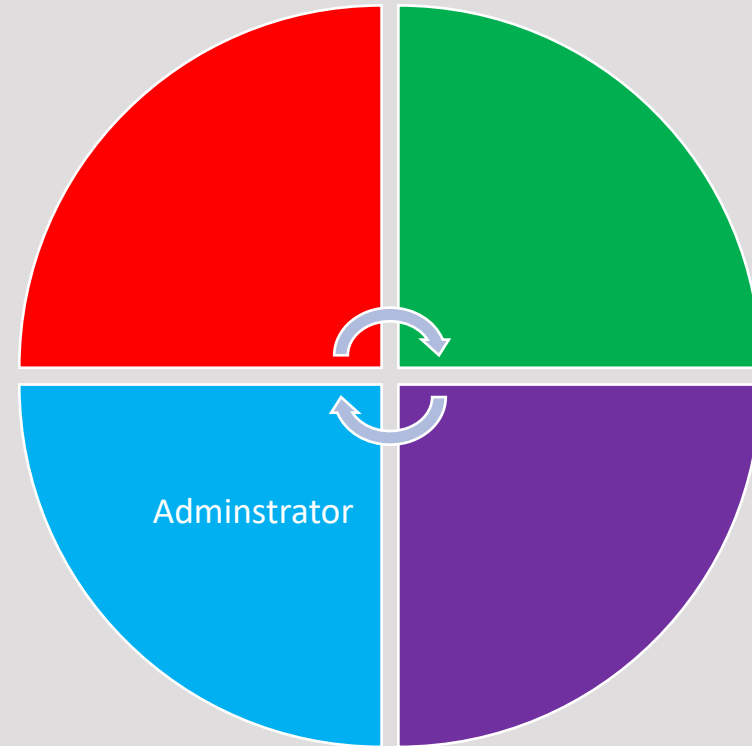
Supervisor Competencies

You Have More Than You Think!

Supervisor Competencies

- Being a supervisor requires a unique combination of knowledge, skills, abilities, and values.

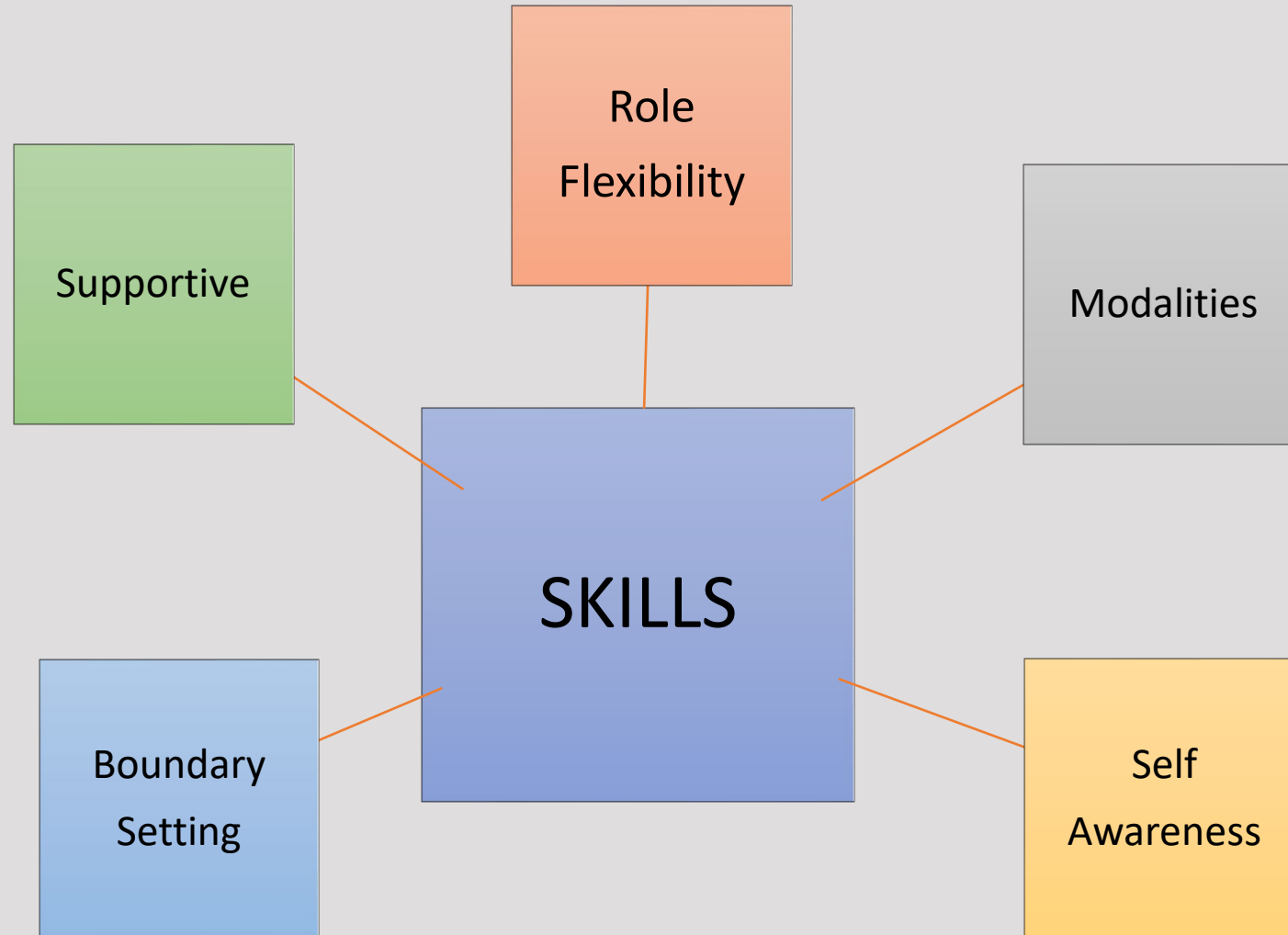
- They all build upon the knowledge, skills, abilities, and values that made you a good direct staff member

Supervisor Knowledge

Based on the work of Carol Falender

Supervisor Skills

Supervisor Values

Cultural Humility

Transparency/ Knowing limitations

Ethical Practice

Values

Person Centered Strengths Based

Empower

Lifelong Learning
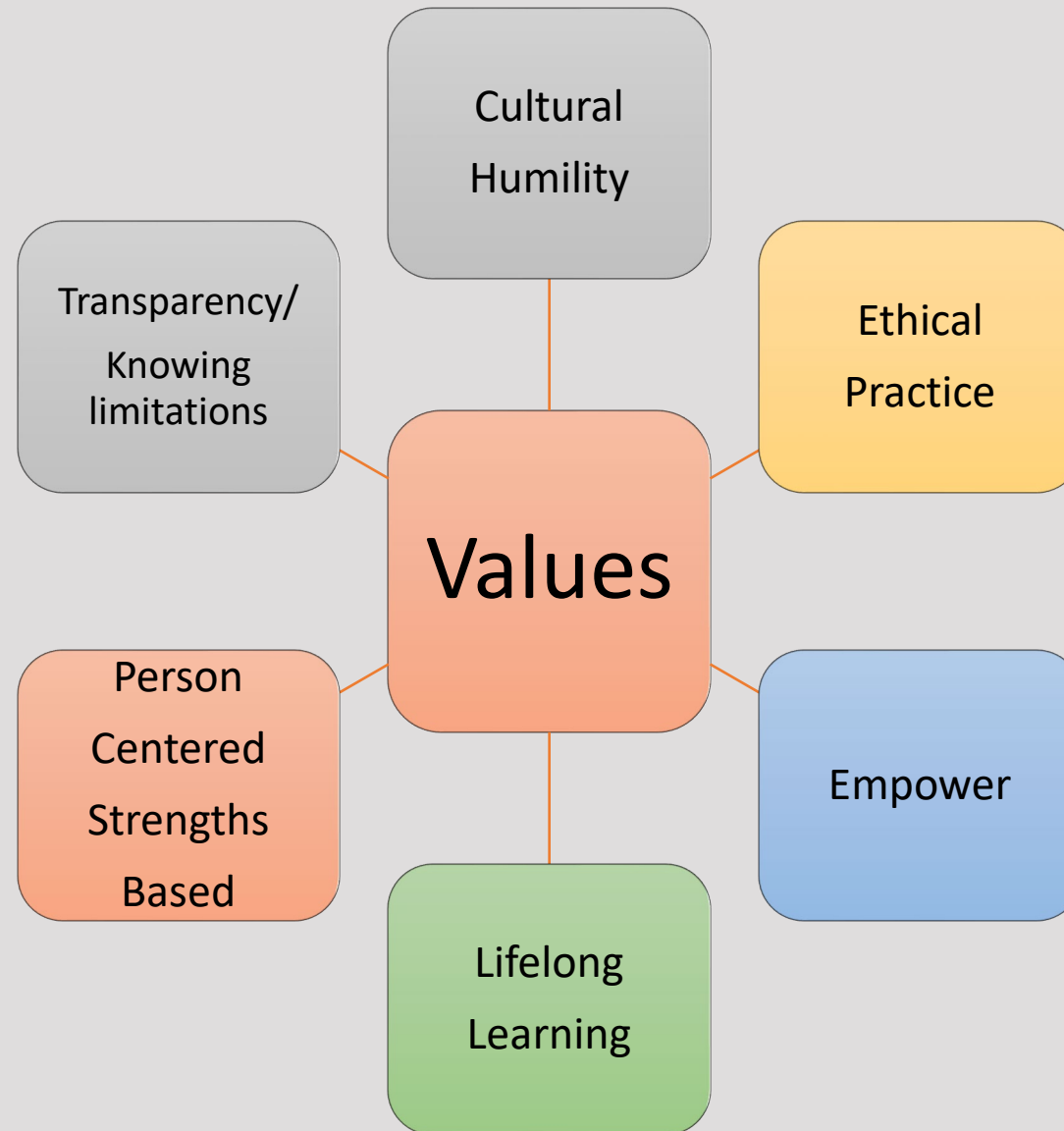
Cultural Competency/Cultural Humility

Cultural Competence and Cultural Humility

- Supervisors need to demonstrate and teach the importance of Cultural Competence and Cultural Humility

- What's the difference?

- Why are both important?

Cultural Competence

- Cultural competence is focused on gaining knowledge about different cultures to enhance our ability to work respectfully with people from diverse cultures, while recognizing one's own cultural biases.

- It is based on the assumption that the more knowledge we have about another culture, the greater the competence in practice.

- However, the concept of "cultural competence" has limitations for practice. It suggests:
  - There is categorical knowledge a person can gain about a group of people, which can lead to stereotyping and bias
  - There is an endpoint to becoming fully culturally competent.

Cultural Humility

- Cultural humility is the "ability to maintain an interpersonal stance that is other-oriented (or open to the other) in relation to aspects of the cultural identity that are most important to the client." (Hook et. al, 2013)

- It has intrapersonal and interpersonal aspects:
  - Intrapersonal – an accurate view of oneself, especially our limitations
  - Interpersonal – it involves a focus on the other person rather than being self-centered and limited by a sense of the superiority of our beliefs

Supervision and Cultural Humility

- Practicing and modeling cultural humility involves:
  - Recognizing and creating opportunities for productive conversations and learning about culture
  - Creating a safe space for staff discussion, growth and learning
  - Facilitating growth, learning and understanding at all levels of practice.

Cultural Humility and Safety in Supervision
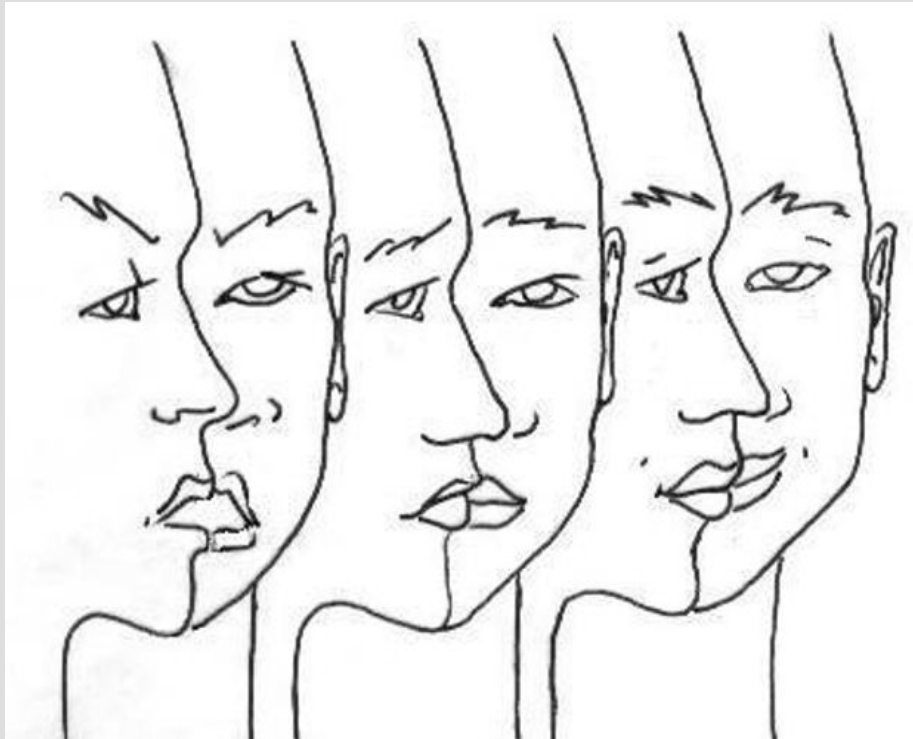
- Supervisors can create a safe space for staff to explore bias by:
  - Becoming self-aware and examining their own biases
  - Supporting supervisees in their own process of becoming more self-aware
  - Validating supervisee's feelings about prior experiences of racism and bias
  - Facilitating an open discussion of racial and cultural dynamics
  - Acknowledging the power dynamic inherent in the supervisory relationship
  - Seeking opportunities to create institutional change

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Making the Transition

The Supervisor: A Systems View

Larger System

Agency

Supervisor

Staff

Recipient

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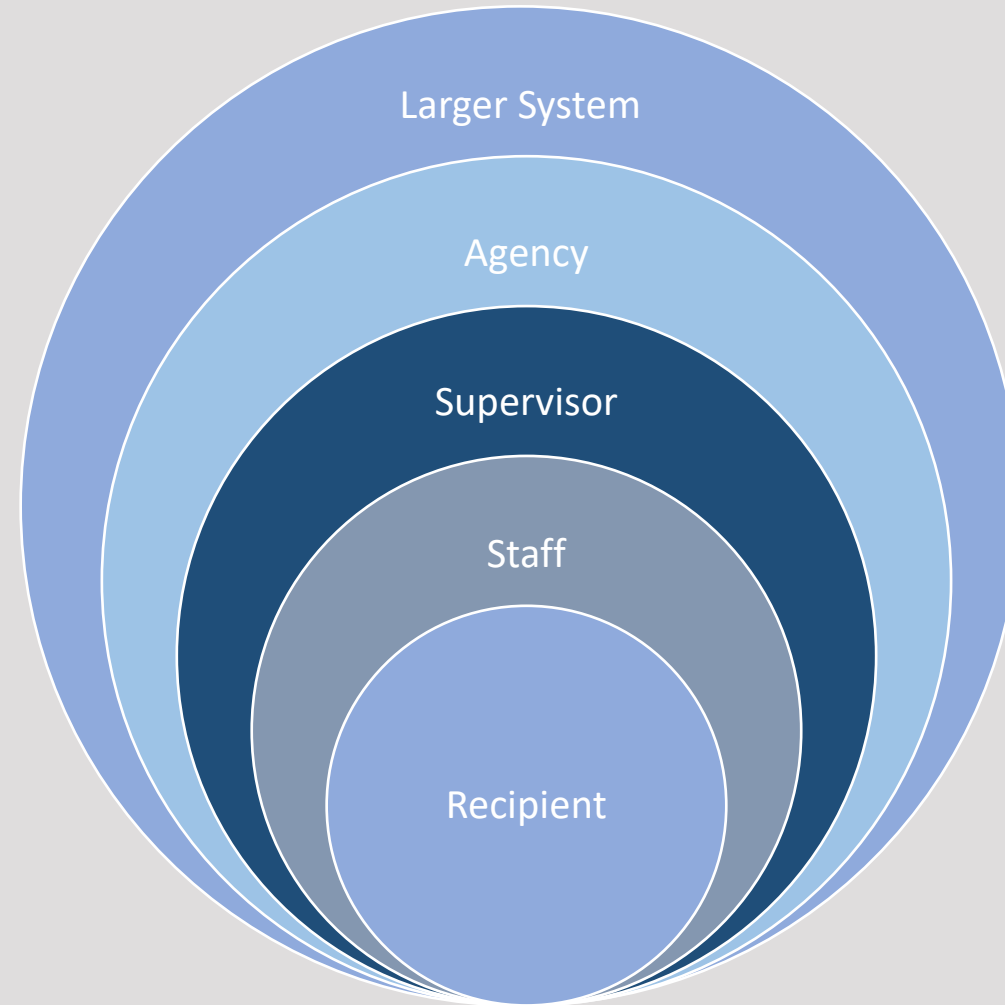
The Transition to Supervisor

- New Role

- Authority and Power

- Becoming part of a new team

- Dual relationships - Boundaries

- Focus

Larger System

Agency

Supervisor

Staff

Recipient
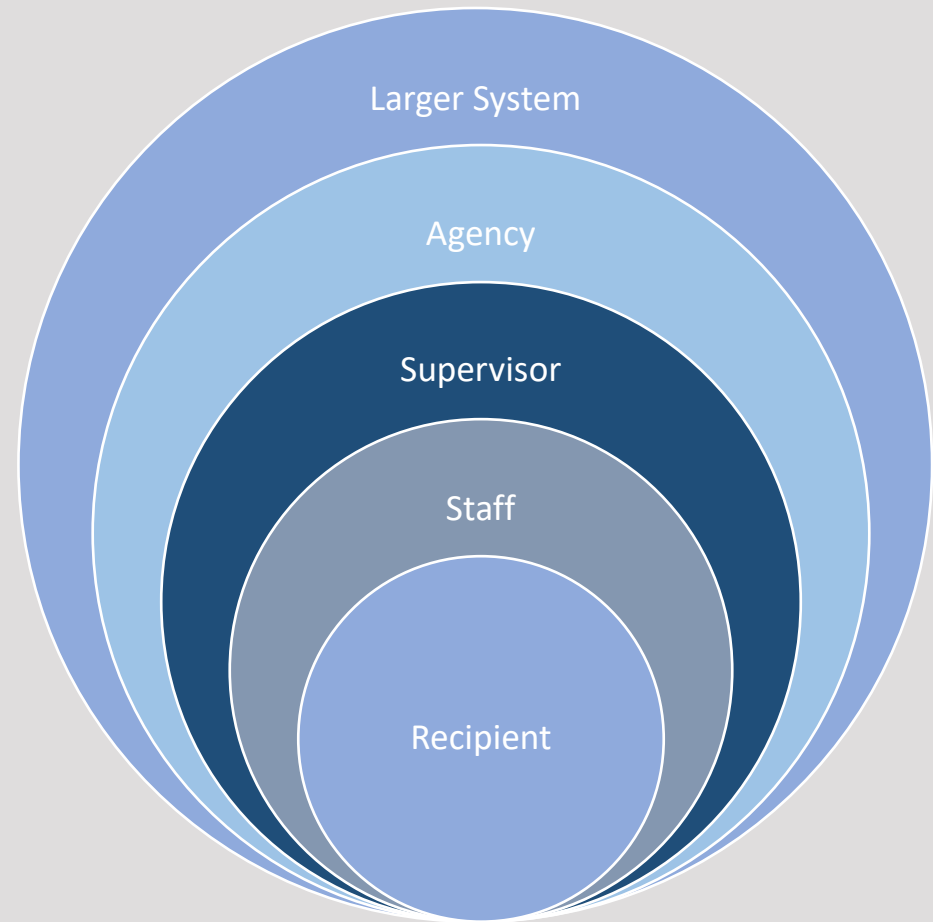
The Transition to Supervisor

- Authority and Power
  - "To be a good manager, supervisors need to be secure and without the need to be universally loved." *Donovan and Jackson*

  - The goal is to be transparent and ethical.

What Do I Do First?

- Learn the agency's/program's policies and procedures
- Learn Human Resources policies and procedures
- Understand the program's goals, oversight requirements, regulations, reimbursement and contracts
- Take the time to learn about your supervisee's professional goals, interests, skills, strengths
- Establish your expectations for staff about supervision – frequency, length, preparation
- Establish an agreement with your supervisor about expectations for your supervision and training

Becoming part of a new team

Balancing competing demands with limited resources

Managing expectations – up and down

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Dual relationships – Boundaries

Do
- Assign work equitably
- Help staff understand their feelings about the change

Don't
- Avoid holding staff accountable
- Take-on too much of the staff person's responsibilities
  - *Especially those that aren't "fun"*
- Become angry/resentful when staff aren't doing their part
  - *Don't take things personally*
- Try sharing things like you did when you were "friends"
  - *Buddies-to-boss*

Supervision and Workplace Culture

Workplace Culture – Management Style

- Management by default means leading through passivity, easiest path of least resistance

- Managing by design means planning and following a set or designed or carefully planned path, thoughtful leadership

| DEFAULT	DESIGN
Catch staff doing something wrong	Catch staff doing something right
Stay behind your desk	Manage by walking around
Check up on staff	Check in with staff
Add to "to do" list	Delegate a task
Talk more than you listen	Listen more than you talk
Show you are busy	Show you are accessible
Assign blame	Make it safe to fail
Solve problems	Facilitate problem solving
Email staff only	Call your staff

Anxiety, Stress and Learning

- Mild-to-moderate levels of anxiety are generally motivating towards learning and productivity.

- High levels of anxiety are the biggest hindrance to learning.

- Prior individual and systemic experiences (e.g., racism, bias, invalidation) affect supervisees sense of safety and expectations.
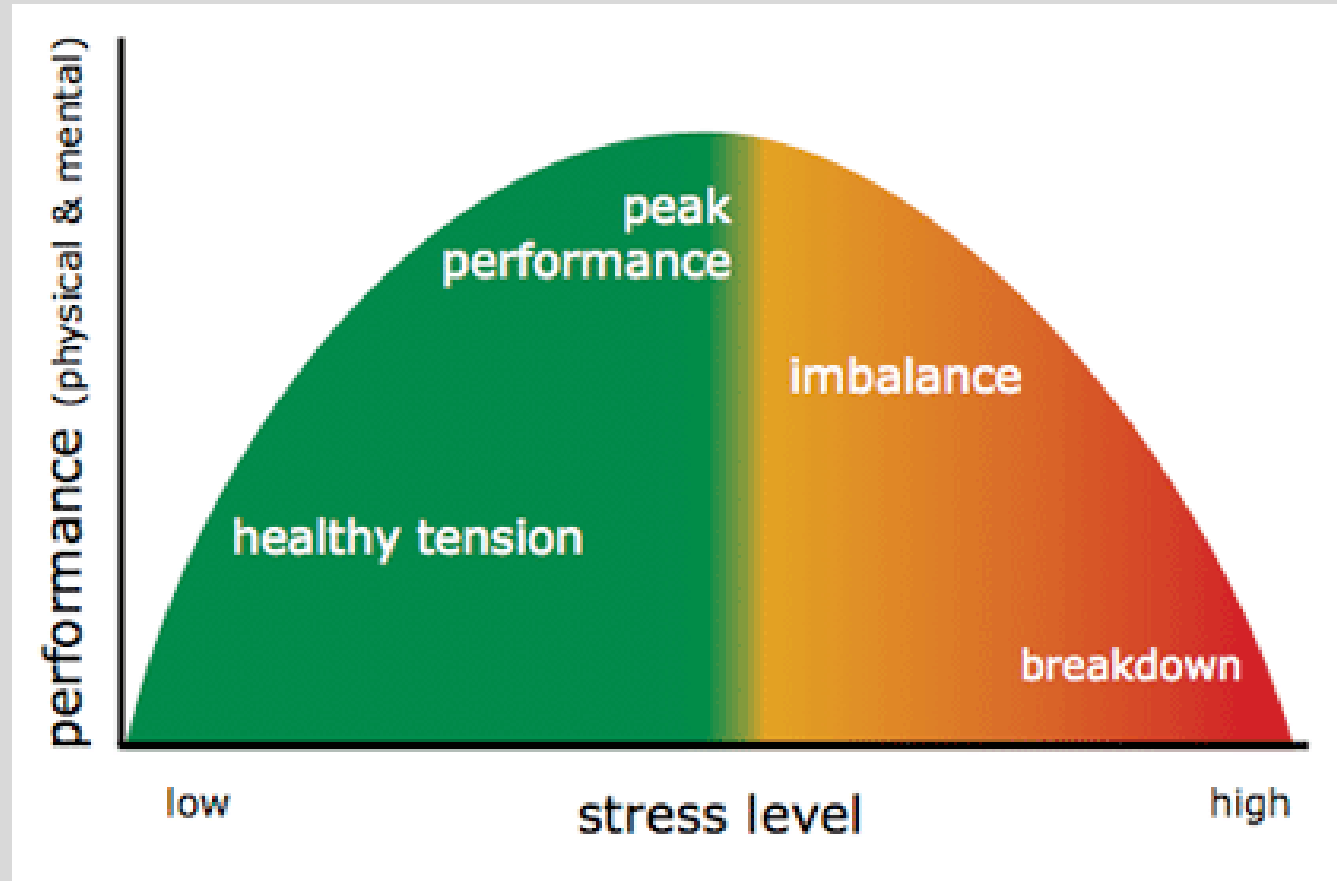
What Makes Supervisees Anxious?

- Performing

- Fear of being evaluated – belief that evaluation = criticism

- Existing conflicts with team members

- Personal problems

- Concerns about personal and recipient safety

- Supervisor projecting onto supervisees their own anxieties around performance and program operations

- Lack of structure and transparency
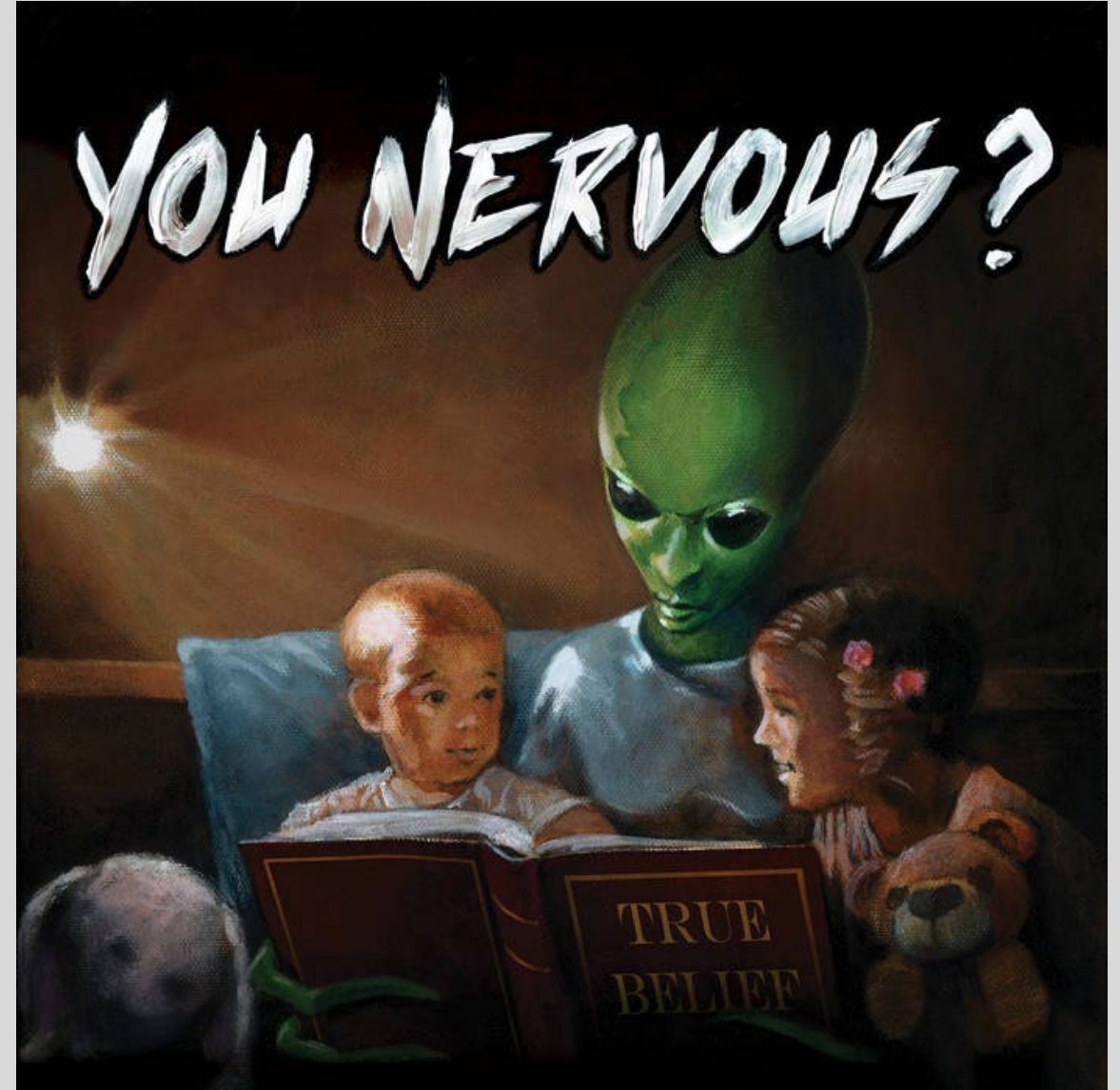
Why don't staff talk about workplace stress?

- Fear their boss would interpret it as lack of interest or unwillingness to do the activity
- Scared of being labeled "weak" or not taken seriously
- Fear it would affect promotion opportunities
- Thinking it would go in their personnel file

The Anxiety and Depression Association of America

Developing Your Staff

Developing Staff

- Help staff to develop the direct practice and professional abilites
  - Begins with an assessment of strengths, needs and challenges
  - Collaboratively develop goals, objectives and action steps using the SMART rubric
  - Periodic review of progress towards goals and objectives

- Establish a 'contract' for working together
  - Frequency and duration of supervision (individual and group)
  - Expectations for supervision sessions – structure and preparation

- ***Do these processes sound familiar?***

Constructive Feedback -

- Knowing how to give constructive feedback is one of the best tools you have.

- The goal of feedback is improvement – professional and personal.

- Positive feedback helps us enhance our best qualities – identifies what we're doing well and how we can do it even better

- Negative feedback, when properly given, creates greater opportunities for growth and learning.

Constructive Feedback, Best Practices

- Build Trust

- Balance the positives and the negatives

- Talk in person

- Be specific and and clear

- Avoid judging the behavior

- Don't confuse the person with their actions

- Be consistent with frequent conversations

- Understand the context before providing feedback

Examples

What was said

- You are missing deadlines, and it impacting the rest of the team.
- You seemed annoyed in the meeting yesterday; it made everyone uncomfortable.
- I've seen your late-night emails to the team; I'm concerned you are not in control of your work.

What it could be replaced with

- I've noticed you are finding time management a challenge. Is there anything I can do to help?
- I noticed you appeared upset yesterday at the meeting. Can we discuss how things are going?
- I've seen your late-night emails to the team; I'm worried about your work–life balance. Can we dig in a little deeper to understand your workload?

Thoughts On Evaluating Staff

- Can't avoid it - *supervision is an inherently unequal relationship*
- You can't eliminate subjectivity – *expressing an opinion is part of the process*
- Most of the time you are using a structured evaluation selected by the organization – *some are better than others, none are perfect*
- Supervision must be documented – *"If it's not in writing it didn't happen."*
- Not everyone can do a job – *it is sometimes a kindness to help someone see that their career and success lies elsewhere*

Don't Forget About Yourself!

YOU CAN'T POUR FROM AN Empty Cup. TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF FIRST.
#onpoint
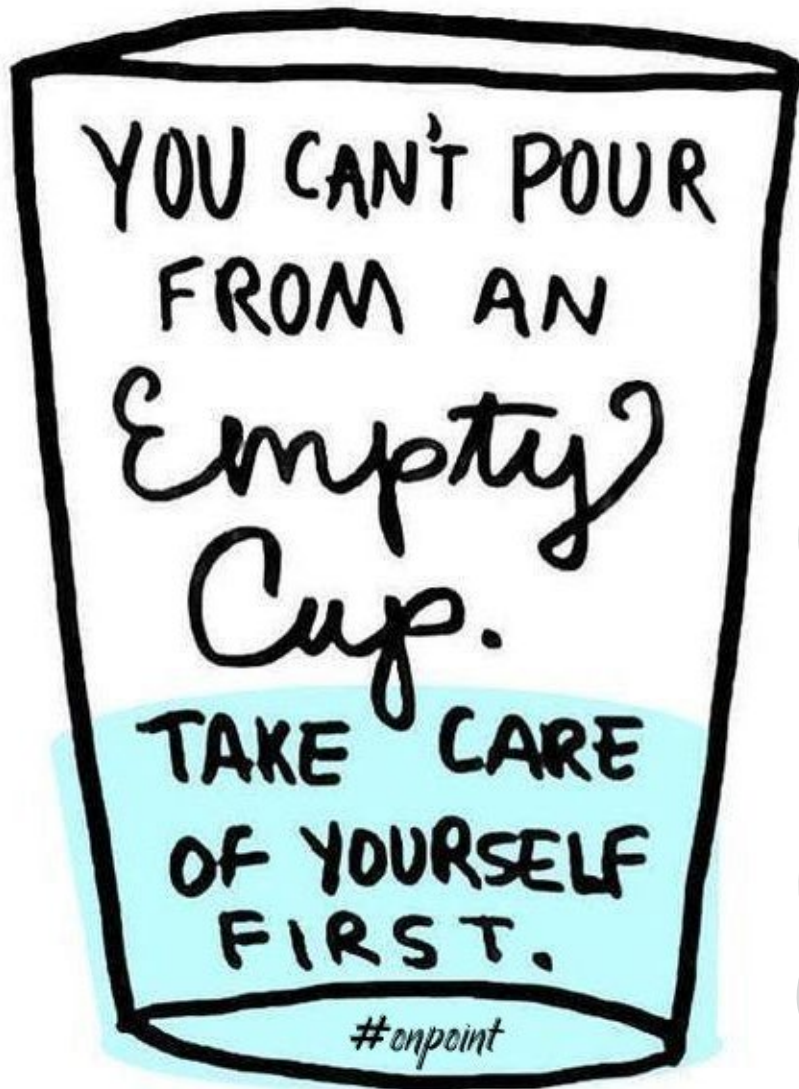
Self-Care

- Self-care is critical to maintaining professional boundaries

- When we feel exhausted and burned out:
  - We may struggle with setting boundaries because we are feeling emotionally vulnerable and have a greater need for comfort, support and validation, or
  - We may create rigid emotional boundaries to protect ourselves

Self-Care – What Can We Do?

- Setting boundaries between work and your personal life

- Not try to be all things to all people

- Not feeling like you need to be available all the time

- Practice Self-Compassion

The Eight "Truths" of Supervision

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Eight "Truths" of Supervision

1. The main purpose of supervision is to ensure quality recipient care.

2. Supervision is all about relationship.

3. Cultural humility and ethical practice underly all supervisory interactions.

4. Demonstrate healthy vulnerability – be willing to show your commitment to lifelong learning

Eight "Truths" of Supervision

5. Don't stay in your office – be in a position to directly observe your staff in action and get input from recipients.

6. Know your stuff
   a. Become skilled in the EBPs and services delivered by your program
   b. Learn all relevant agency/program/oversight policies and procedures, standards of care, funding requirements

7. Practice self-care – model it, encourage it and teach it

8. Be a responsible change agent

Helpful Sources

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Planned Upcoming CPI Webinars for Supervisors

- Burnout, Secondary/Vicarious Trauma, and Empathy Fatigue – 11/19/2024

- Cultural Humility Within the Context of Supervision – 12/17/2024

- Guiding, Developing and Evaluating Staff – 1/15/2025

- Supervision and Suicide Prevention – 2/4/2025

- Motivational Interviewing and Stages of Change in the Supervision Process – 3/11/2025

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